



Figure 1 Armored units training at Desert Training Center (Signal Corps photo)

The Desert Training Center in World War II

By Rod Crossley

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As the General read the Los Angeles *Times* over breakfast he could not help noticing the headline “Rommel on the move again”. The officer wondered if the new training facility General Patton was establishing out in the California desert would make a difference when the U.S. Army forces arrived in North Africa.

When the United States entered World War II they had, or were building, standard divisional training centers plus maneuver areas in Louisiana and Tennessee designed to handle up to two corps in a semi-military environment. It was the opinion of the War Department that the next major war would be fought in a European environment, but it was soon clear this would be a global conflict requiring special training of our armed forces. The Army Ground Forces opened four special training camps between March and September 1942. These were: the Airborne Training Command at Camp Benning, Georgia; the Amphibious Training Center at Tallahassee, Florida [later Camp Gordon]; the Mountain Training Center at Camp Carson, Colorado; and the Desert Training Center (DTC) at Camp Young, California.

The War Department sent General George S. Patton Jr., Commander of the 1st Armored Corps, to California in March of 1942 to establish a headquarters for the Desert Training Center. He selected a site 20 miles east of Indio near the little town of Desert Center, California. The camp was named for General S.B.M. Young, an Indian fighter and the first Army Chief of Staff. The center was activated on April 7, 1942 at the Hotel Indio, Indio, California.

General Patton established the high standards and discipline that the units would follow through out the Desert Training Center’s existence. Patton wrote General Jacob Devers, Commander of US Armored Forces, on April 28, 1942, “I propose to hold the housekeeping arrangement here to the minimum, that is, to spend just as little time as possible on ‘prettying up’ and as much time as possible on tactical and technical instruction”. Patton’s tenure was short because he left on July 30, 1942 to help prepare for Operation Torch, the invasion of North Africa, but his influence was felt to the end.

The Army formed 87 divisions of all types during World War II. Out of these 87 divisions only 20 divisions—13 infantry and 7 armored—participated in maneuvers at Desert Training Center. It should be noted that out of 26 divisions formed after July 1942 only one would train at the center. Only one of the 18 National Guard divisions inducted during 1940-41

was assigned to the center. The majority of the other divisions took part in maneuvers in other areas of the United States prior to overseas shipment. The need for divisional maneuvers can be seen by the losses suffered in late 1944 and 1945 by those divisions rushed overseas without participating in this type of training.

The *Tank Destroyer School 1943 Glossary* describes a maneuver in part as:

as a tactical exercise executed on the ground or map, in simulation of war and involving two opposing sides, though one side may be outlined, represented, or imaginary. The plural of the term applies to a series of such exercises, generally involving large bodies of troops in the field in simulation of war.

Desert Center was ideally suited to meet the requirements put forth in the description. Within its boundaries the Army was able to plan and operate any size maneuver under realistic conditions. The size of the center made it possible to combine operations using aircraft and live fire exercises with all types of arms that could not be duplicated at any other training or maneuver area in the United States. The majority of the divisions and some of the supporting units had already conducted training maneuvers at other locations prior to their arrival at the center. The purpose of the Desert Training Center was to move officers and enlisted personnel from their modem camps with all the conveniences to a harsh environment which would temper them for the real discomforts and hazards of combat over an extended period of time. As soon as each division had squared itself away in its new desert surroundings it would begin an established training schedule. This was:

Week 1	Individual, crew and squad training;
Week 2	Company or battery training;
Week 3	Battalion training;
Week 4	Regimental training;
Weeks 5-7	Divisional field exercises; and
Weeks 8-13	Corps maneuver.

Camp Young became the largest military post in area in the United States Army. The original 10,000 square miles grew to its final size of 28,000 square miles in mid 1943 (**Map 1**). Most of the original land was already government owned. The rest was sparsely populated which made it easier for the government to acquire. Needles, Blythe, Indio, California and Yuma, Arizona, were located on the edge of the camp. Of these four towns only Yuma had a population over

5000 people. Military installations were already located within or near Camp Young. An ordnance test section at Camp Seeley, a Field artillery training area at Imperial, California, an Engineer test section at Yuma, plus the Antiaircraft Artillery (AAA) Training Center at Camp Haan, Riverside all predated Camp Young. The Air Corps had fields at Victorville, and Las Vegas, and a depot at San Bernardino. The Desert Training Center stretched from west of Pomona, California almost to Phoenix, Arizona and from the Mexican border near Yuma north to Searchlight Nevada. Within this area the Army built ten temporary camps in addition to Camp Young; some were designed for divisional use, others were used by combat and supply units. Because the desert training center was established so quickly most of the camps were built by the arriving troops. The camps were later considered permanent when concrete or wood floors were added to the pyramidal tents. The ten camps were: Coxcomb located at Desert Center; Essex; Granite and Iron Mountain both at Iron Mountain; Ibis at Needles; Pilot Knob at Ogilby all in California. In Arizona there were: Laguna at Yuma; plus Bouse, Horn, and Hyder.

The remoteness of the region plus the limited rail facilities hindered the dispatching of passenger and freight cars. The accumulation of cars was so great at one point that the Transportation Corps placed a four day stop order on shipments to the center to relieve car congestion. The massive movement of troops and equipment into and out of the center led to the request by the Transportation corps that the center reduce these activities. This request was based on the problems of trying to support the center and the war in the Pacific over the same rail lines. In response to this request the War Department directed that the trains bringing in one unit would take a leaving unit to its next post. The center further reduced traffic flow by setting up vehicle motor pools and equipment depots so that in-coming units could draw their needs. One officer stated that when the 4th Armored Division was issued its tanks, trucks and other equipment they were in horrible condition, and they were in even worse condition when the division turned in its equipment.

The Surgeon General of the U.S. Army ordered that medical units designed to operate in overseas theaters of operations would only train in the United States. Medical services to all army troops within the states would be provided by the station and gen-

eral hospitals. The Army's desire for realism necessitated that the Medical Corps supply combat medical units to staff one 150-bed hospital, eight 250-bed hospitals, and three 1000-bed hospitals of the type the units would operate overseas.

General Patton planned to have a signal repair shop and a signal company operate the post signal activities at Camp Young plus an additional eight signal companies for service with the troops. With all the demands placed on the signal corps across the nation, signal troops were always in short supply. This shortage of troops meant that the local phone company provided communications for Camp Young from a central exchange in Blyth. Beyond that, the signal companies of Camp Young and the divisions had the responsibility for service.

Even under the spartan conditions established for the center it was necessary to build hospitals, railroad facilities, roads, air fields and supply depots. This work was performed by the engineering unit assigned to the Desert Training Center and those engineers which came to train with their divisions.

The first troops arrived at Desert Training Center in mid-April 1942. The first division to arrive was the 3rd Armored Division on July 26, 1942. The Division left Camp Polk, Louisiana, in 30 trains bringing all their equipment with them. This was one of the divisions with no previous maneuver experience, so the troops were uncertain about what conditions to expect. When they exited their cool day coaches at Freda, California, a siding on the Santa Fe branch line to Phoenix, they stepped into a brilliant expanse of sand, rock, and sun. The temperature was around 130 degrees on that day, and with the wind blowing it felt as though the troops had stepped into a blast furnace. The troops and equipment moved west 13 miles from Freda to what would later be Camp Granite. Here the troops and their engineering unit built a camp complete with roads and ranges. Their shower and bath facilities were built next to the Los Angeles aqueduct.

As the war in North Africa was being fought, the War Department began to review its thinking about the real purpose of the Desert Training Center. The Army decided that for maximum effectiveness, the center should be converted to a simulated theater of operations. This pertained the divisions and other units, after completion of the regulation training syllabus, to spend up to 13 more weeks in post graduate training under combat conditions.

In January 1943 the War Department began the development of the theater of operations, which included a combat zone and a communication zone. This was the first time this type of training command existed within the United States. Every unit and every operation would be under the theater commander, including the Army Air Force units—both combat and service at Rice Army Airfield, Desert Center Army Airfield, and Shavers Summit Field. Everyone, including Headquarters personnel, would operate and live under simulated war conditions.

The communication zone was originally designed to surround the combat zone and to contain the units and facilities necessary to support the Army. Surrounding the combat zone led to problems during the maneuvers as the simulated war games could easily shift from the combat zone to the communication zone. In mid-1943 the communication zone was given boundaries, basically on a line south from Kelso to near Desert Center, which corrected the problem. A directive issued in January 1943 enlarged the center to include Army Service of Supply installations existing, or those being built at or near Needles, Camp Young, Indio, Pomona, Banning in California, and Yuma, Arizona. The headquarters of the communication zone was located in Banning, while the general depot was at Camp Young. To supply the center, the Army arranged with the Southern Pacific Railroad to run daily ration trains to locations within the boundaries of the maneuver area. The maneuvers held at Desert Training Center were designed for long duration, thus the supply services organizations had to learn to keep the

troops supplied over a long period and to keep supply services vehicles moving to meet the greater demand. Men, material, food and fuel were funneled forward from supply and ammunition depots as far west as Los Angeles to the combat area under strict combat conditions. Service trucks traveled the supply routes under black out conditions with the drivers averaging only four hours sleep in 24 hours. The 4th Armored Corps Chief of Staff said, "Operations here on the desert are conducted on a war basis. We do not have to simulate the problems of supply in the desert. They already exist and war only intensifies them. We hope to make our troops so tough that the 'real McCoy' will come easy. This is war-all but! And it's a mighty small change from 'all but' to 'all out'"

Seven maneuvers were conducted at Desert Training Center during its existence. The first was conducted by General Patton, but did not contain any divisional units and was not named. The next one was conducted by the 2nd Armored Corps from August to October 1942 and was called, the 2nd Armored Corps California maneuver. The 3rd and 5th Armored and the 7th Motorized divisions took part in this operation. The next five maneuvers were called the California Maneuvers and each was given a number. The first of these was conducted by the 4th Armored Corps with the 4th and 6th

Armored Division and the 6th Motorized Division. It lasted from October 1942 to March 1943. This was also the first maneuver conducted under the simulated theater of operations. The 9th Corps started the 2nd California Maneuver on March 29, 1943. It would contain only the 7th Armored Division and three infantry divisions—the 8th, 33rd and the 77th. The 3rd California maneuver took place from July to November 1943 under the control of the 15th Corps. It consisted of the 9th Armored plus the 79th, 81st, 85th, and 93rd Infantry Divisions. The 90th division moved from Berkeley, Texas to participate in this maneuver in early September, then 15 days later was transferred to Fort Dix, New Jersey. This was the shortest time any division had at Desert Training Center. The 11th Armored and the 80th, 90th and 104th Infantry Divisions participated in both the 4th California Maneuver under the 4th Corps from November 1943 to January 1944, and the last maneuver at the center under the 10th corps from January to March of 1944.

The War Department changed the name of the area to the Desert Center Training Center, California-Arizona Maneuver Area (CAMA) in October 1943. The center continued to grow more realistic and handled one maneuver after another, but its continuity was broken in December 1943. The War Department assigned the 3rd Tactical Air Division, including its services unit and air base, to the 3rd Air Force. It was now up to the commanding general of the 3rd Air Force to supply air units needed for the air/ground training at CAMA as he saw fit. This division of command ended the period of single, unified control over all units assigned to the center.

The continuing shipment of service units overseas placed an even greater strain on the maneuver area in late 1943. At this point, because of the lack of services units and the fact that there was no apparent way that the problem could be corrected, the War Department issued orders closing the Desert Training Center as of April 30, 1944. The 104th division left the Desert Training Center on March 15th, and the center was turned over to the 9th Service Command on May 1st, 1944. Camp Young, the Communication Headquarters at Banning, and Pomona Ordnance Depot were the only facilities continuing after April 15th. It was their responsibility to police the Maneuver Area, close the camps, and collect or salvage all equipment and materiel left at the center.

Thus ended one of the most realistic training areas ever developed by the Army. In only 24 months of operation the center trained thousands of troops on how to conduct themselves in a combat environment. Every senior officer who participated in Desert Training Center maneuvers agreed the experience was very valuable to them later in combat.

DESERT TRAINING CENTER POSTAL HISTORY

As the first units began to train at Desert Training Center their outgoing mail had a return address that read: soldier name, unit #, APO number, and the nearest post office which would process their mail, such as Barstow or Needles (**Figure 2**). The non-divisional units arriving at Desert Training Center

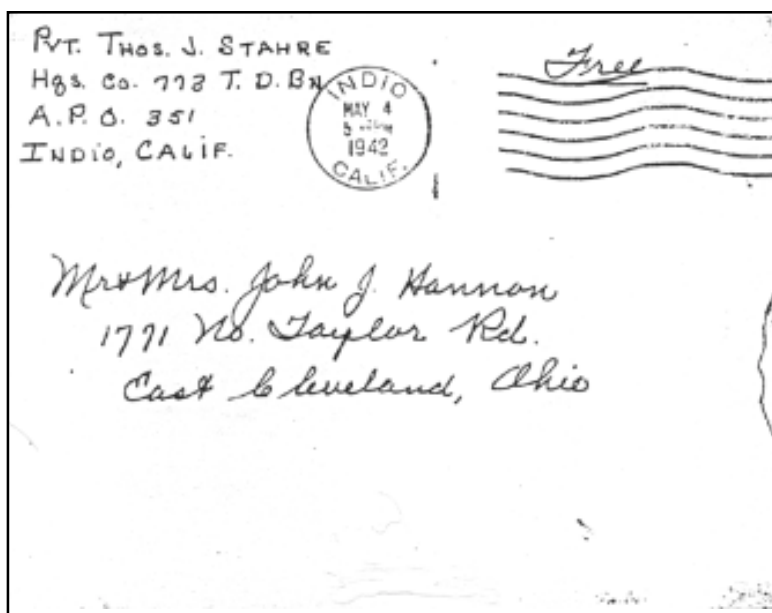


Figure 2. The first units to train at the Center used return addresses similar to this.

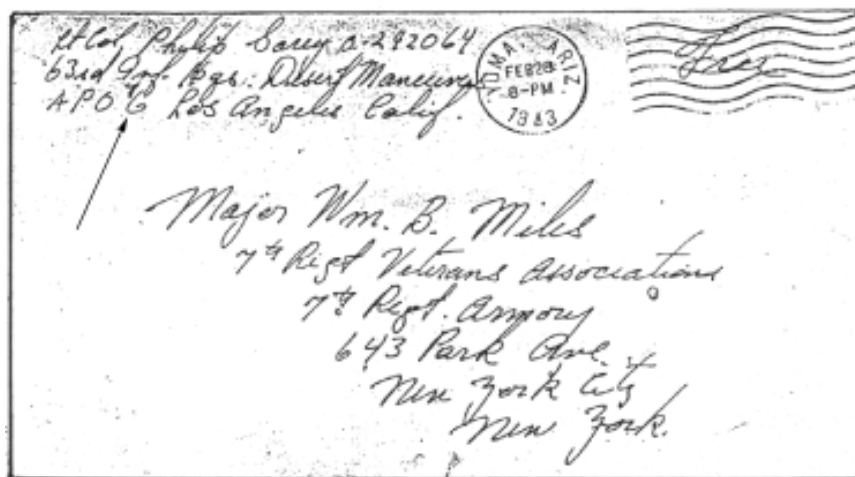


Figure 3. Prior to March 1943, DTC personnel used APO numbers in their return addresses, but mail was still postmarked at local civilian post offices.

did not have an assigned APO number. During their time at the center, a special APO number was provided for the unit's use. As the first divisional units arrived in July 1942, the Army changed the way mail was to be addressed. The return address would be: soldiers name, unit #, APO number, c/o Postmaster, Los Angeles. However, the mail was still processed and postmarked through Barstow, Blythe, Indio, Needles, Yuma or Los Angeles (**Figure 3**). Mail from Camp Young personnel was

processed in Indio with the camp as the return address.

The Army's decision to change the center to a simulated theater of operations changed the way the mail was handled. If the theater was to operate properly then at every phase the units had to operate as though they were in combat. All units assigned to Desert Center, including the Air Force and those at Camp Young, were to use their assigned APO number c/o Post Master Los Angeles. The mail from these units would be canceled with a US Army Postal Service postmark. Other military

facilities within the theater, such as Rice and Blythe Air Force Bases, continued to use civilian postmarks. The date this postal change became effective was March 1, 1943, and the last civilian cancels correspond with this date. However, the date of the first postmark by the US Army Postal Service is March 7, 1943. During the period from March 1st to the 7th an unusual Los Angeles postmarked was used. It was a double circular dial with Los Angeles, Calif. at the top, and Unit 5 at the bottom with the date inside the circles (**Figure 4**). The postmark is not

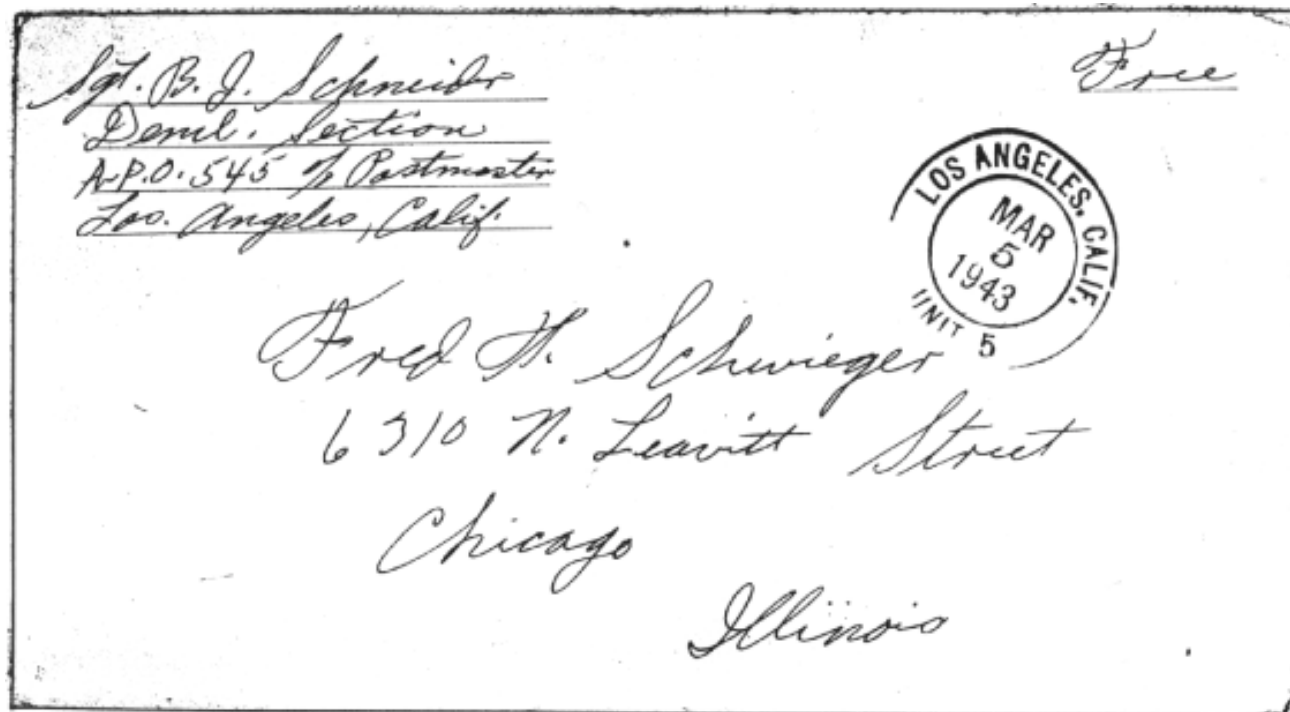


Figure 4. There was a brief transition period in early March 1943 when Army Post Office markings replaced local civilian postmarks on mail from DTC. These Unit 5 markings are known only from March 1st to 7th, 1943.

listed in Salley's *History of California Post Offices*, but the omission is not surprising as he does not list several US military postmarks used in California during the war. The probable reason behind this non-listing is that military post offices' opening and closing dates during WW II were not listed in the *Postal Bulletins* for security reasons.

There are other examples of this type of cancel being used to postmark military mail across the nation during the war. It is the author's view that the U.S. Post Office Department wanted to use this type of cancel rather than the APO device for handing the mail from Desert Training Center. This view is rein-

forced on review of the registered mail from the center. However, someone on the 4th Armored (later the 20th) Corps staff, which was conducting the First California Maneuver at the time, decided that the APO postmark would be used. This is confirmed by a statement in the Corps history that "throughout the communications zone there were laundries, bakeries, post offices, supply depots and the heavy maintenance shops of the ordnance". At first, the Army processed the mail using a machine cancel (**Figure 5**). This was soon followed by the standard four-bar postmark (**Figure 6**).

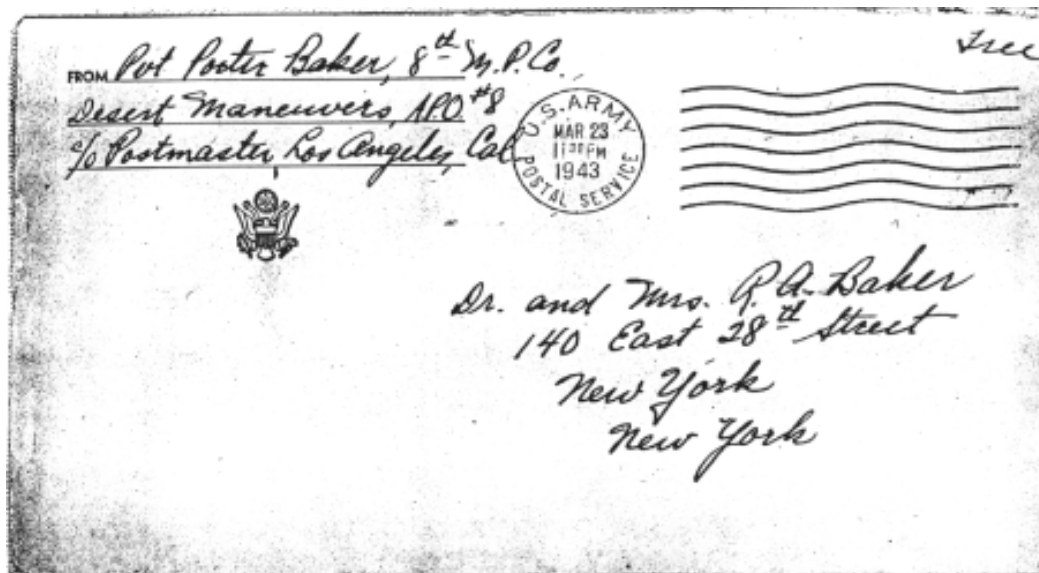


Figure 5. Machine cancels such as this are known to have been used on mail from the DTC dating from mid-March 1943. (reduced)

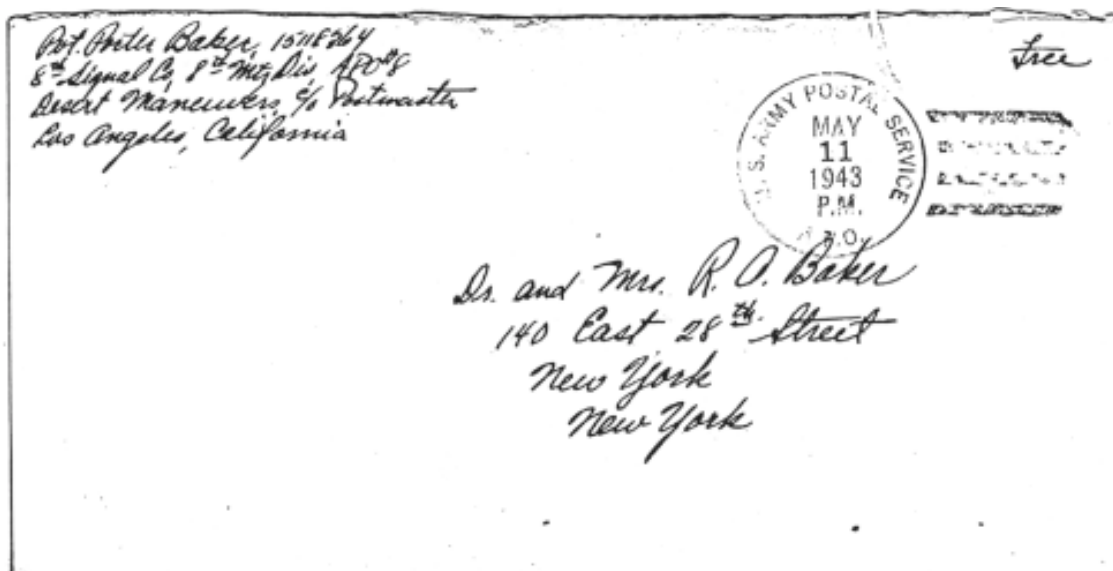


Figure 6. Mail from personnel assigned to the Desert Training Center from late spring and summer 1943 typically bears four-bar postmarks such as this with no identifying APO number in the dial. (reduced)

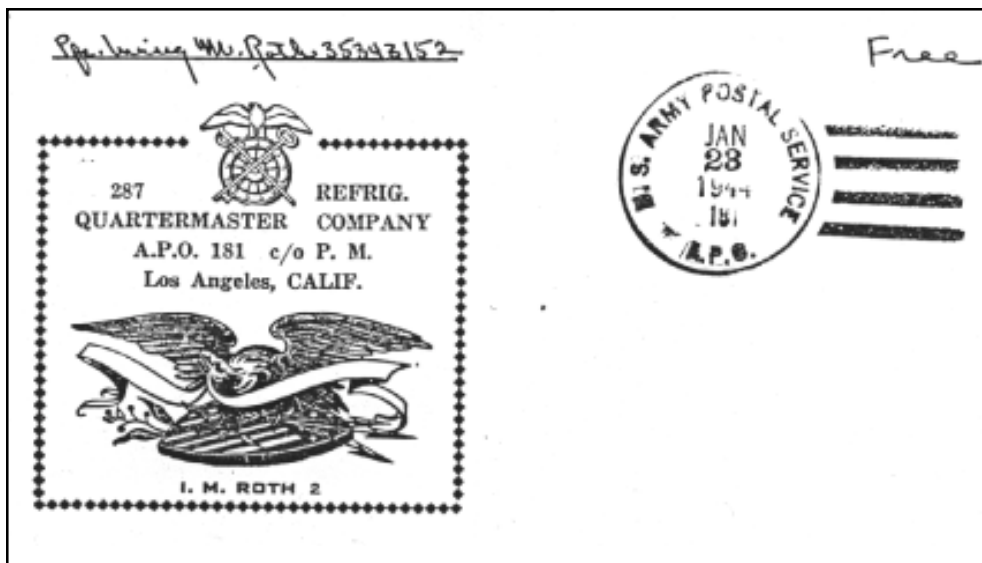


Figure 7. Use of APO numbers in the postmark dial did not occur until late 1943, and even then it did not become standard practice. (reduced)

Initially, no APO number appeared within the postmark portion of the four-bar cancel. It was not until late 1943 that some units added their APO number (**Figure 7**), but this did not become a standard practice.

As the volume of mail increased with increases in activity at the Center, some Army Post Offices could not keep up with the volume of mail flowing through their office. In lieu of canceling the mail, they would simply allow the mail to enter the system unpost-marked. This problem seems to have occurred primarily during the third Cali-

fornia Maneuver conducted by the 15th corps from July 23 to November 13, 1943.

A review of registered covers from the period when Army Postal Service postmarks were used shows that this mail was handled differently than first class mail. All the covers reviewed have the correct return address but no APO postmarks were used. Mail going to Canada was processed through Indio with that office's back

stamp. Mail going to addresses in the states used a Los Angeles, California Unit Post Office number backstamp. It appears that each APO unit had its own Los Angeles number to be used on registered mail. In addition, prior to arriving at the Los Angeles Terminal Annex, the registered mail was processed through a central location within the Desert Center. This office used Los Angeles, California, Unit Number 10 as its back stamp. In some cases it took up to three days for the registered mail to arrive at the annex from the maneuver area (**Figure 8**).

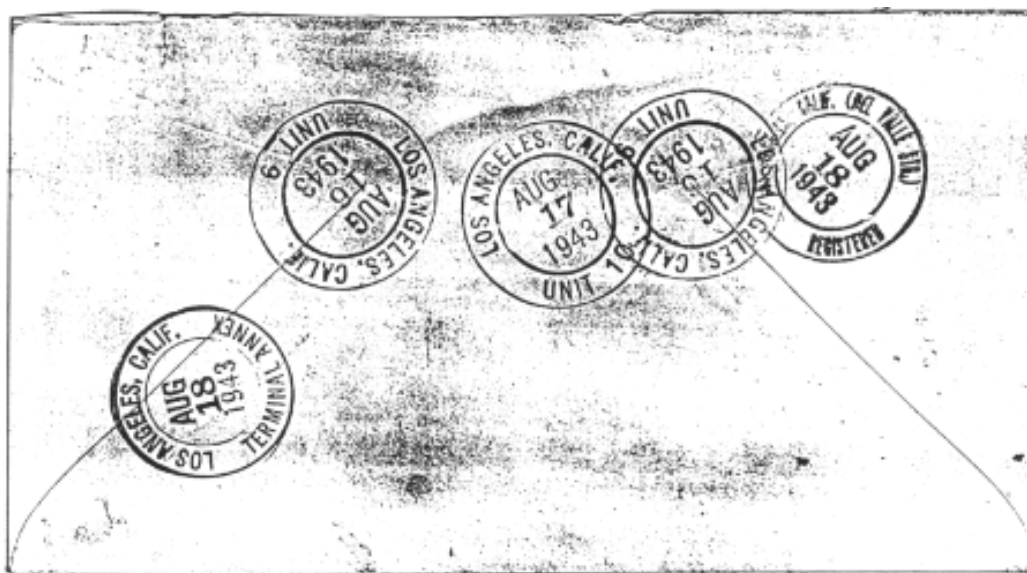


Figure 8. This registered cover was mailed with an APO 184 return address. It bears markings from LOS ANGELES UNIT 9 on Aug 16, UNIT 10 on Aug 17 and TERMINAL ANNEX on Aug 18. (reduced)

The use of Army Postal Service postmarks was discontinued when the last division left the California Arizona Maneuver Area in mid-March 1944. Those units left to clean up the Desert Center Training operation area again used Camp Young as their return address and their mail was postmarked at Indio.

APO NUMBERS USED AT DESERT TRAINING CENTER

The Army Post Office numbers known to have been used by divisions and other units assigned to

the Desert Training Center or California-Arizona Maneuver Area are listed in Table 1 below. Shown in Table 2 are some of the major units assigned to DTC and CAMA to support the divisions. At the same time there were also smaller units of battalion and company size attached to the center for training or support. All of these non-divisional units were assigned APO numbers to be used during their stay at the center.

Table 1

Military Units with APO Numbers Recorded at Desert Training Center

APO	NO	UNIT TYPE	DATE	POSTMARK	NOTES
6	1	INF CO E	01/30/43	CALEXICO	
6	63	INF CO E	02/16/43	BLYTHE	MOTORIZED DIVISION
6	63	INF REG HQ	02/28/43	YUMA	
7	107	CAV. SERVICE TROOP	09/03/42	NEEDLES	
7	53	EVAC HOSP.	09/03/42	NEEDLES	
7	57	MED BN HQ DET	09/15/42	San Luis Obispo	2 covers APO 7 desert maneuver
8	28	F.A. BN	03/15/43	Waynesville MO.	C/O POSTMASTER L.A.
8	8	MP CO	03/23/43	USAPS	**
8	8	SIG CO	04/02/43	USAPS	
8	45	FA BN BTY C	04/03/43	USAPS	
8	8	SIG CO	04/26/43	USAPS	APO**
8	28	INF CO A	04/26/43	YUMA	
8	28	INF CO. E	05/04/43	USAPS	APO*
8	8	SIG CO	05/09/43	USAPS	PM in Dial**
8	8	SIG CO 8 MTZ DIV	05/11/43	USAPS	APO
8	121	INF MED DETCH.	05/24/43	USAPS	
8	12	ENG BN, CO A*	05/25/43	USAPS	A.P.O.
a	8	SIG CO	05/26/43	USAPS	PM in Dial**
8	8	SIG CO	06/16/43	USAPS	PM in Dial**
33	33	QM CO	04/02/43	USAPS	APO
33	136	INF MED DET	05/07/43	ESSEX	
33	123	INF CO D	05/24/43	USAPS	APO
33	122	INF CO.M	06/10/43	USAPS	APO
77	305	INF SERV CO	06/16/43	USAPS	APO
77	777	ORD CO	07/19/43	Cathedral City	
77	307	INF ANTITANK CO	08/23/43	USAPS	APO
80	318	INF	02/28/44	USAPS	Reg cover LA Unit 8 backstamp
80	319	Inf Co B	NO DATE		no pm letter dated 12/26/43
81	323	INF HQ I ST BN	01/11/44	SLO	
81		HQ CO PERSONAL SEC	07/22/43	USAPS	APO
81	322	Inf Reg Co E	NO DATE		No Pm but used**
81		HQIGD	NO DATE		*letter dated 11/03/43, no postmark*
85		HQ S.T. 85TH DIV	09/20/43	USAPS	APO
85	339	INF CO D	NO DATE		NOT PM BUT USED
90	358	INF Co E	12/20/43	USAPS	APO # IN DIAL
90	358	INF REG CO E	NO DATE		NO PM BUT USED**
93	594	FA BN B Bty	10/25/43	LA Unit 23	Rg Cover also unit 10 10/26/43
93	369	INF	11/29/43	USAPS	APO NUM. IN DIAL
95	377	INF SERV CO	10/05/43		PM CAMP POLK
104		HQ Co Med Det	03/12/44	USAPS	APO 104 in dial
180	4	BASE POST OFFICE	08/05/43	USAPS	
180	233	ORD Base Group HQ	08/12/43	USAPS	
180		SURGEON DTC	09/30/43	USAPS	"APO, COMMUNICATION ZONE-
181	287	REF OM CO	01/23/44	USAPO	APO# IN DIAL not addressed"
181	287	REF QM CO	01/23/44	USAPS	APO # IN DIAL 2 diff covers**
181	287	QM REFRIG CO	08/08/43	USAPS	APO
181	287	QM REFRIG CO	08/10/43	USAPS	APO
182	4AAF	AIR SUPP COMM SQ	01/29/44	USAPS	"APO in Dial, Return isl 82-unitl pm LA"
182	144	F.A. Serv Bty I at Bn	07/02/43	USAPS	APO

Table 1(continued)

Military Units with APO Numbers Recorded at Desert Training Center

APO	NO	UNIT TYPE	DATE	POSTMARK	NOTES
182	15	Cavalry	NO DATE		..no P.M.,but used-APO 182-A-1 9'
183	10	Corps HQ Det	01/24/44	USAPS	
183	3616	QM TRUCK CO.	02/19/44	USAPS	APO 187 IN DIAL
183	836	ENG AVL BN	07/01/43	USAPS	2 diff covers
183	473	TRUCKREG	08/06/43	USAPS	
183	623	ORD AM CO	08/11/43	USAPS	
183	31	MED REG	09/03/43	USAPS	
183	610	"HQ,ENGR LIGHT EQU CO"	09/21/43	USAPS	
183	297	Engr Bn Co B	NO DATE		no postmark but was used
183		HQ CO 4TH CORPS	NO DATE		NOT PM BUT USED**
184	388	ENG(HVPN)BN	07/07/43	USAPS	
184	211	Ord Auto Maint Co.	08/16/43	LA Unit 9	Reg cover also unit 10 08/17/43
184	6	RCN SQ TP C	08/22/43	"PHOENIX, AZ"	ON LEAVE
184	259	ORDCOMM,199ORDBN"	09/07/43	YUMA AZ.	
185	546	AAA Bn Med Det	03/08/44	USAPS	APO
185	536	ORD HM CO. TK	09/04/43	USAPS	APO
185	607	T.D. Bn Reoon Co	09/16/43	USAPS	APO
185	607	TD Bn Rec Co	10/06/43	USAPS	
185	607	TK D Bn recon Co.	10/06/43	USAPS	APO
185	536	HO ORD HM CO TANK	11/24/43	USAPS	APO
185	526	ORD CO	NO DATE		NOT PM BUT USED**
187	485	AAA AW Bn (sem)	01/20/44	INDIO	Registered cover to Canada
188	740	TANK BN HQ CO	01/29/44	USAPS	No APO in Dial different cover
188	701	MEDTKBN	02/11/44	USAPS	APO
188	701	M & R Bn	02/17/44	USAPS	APO
188	740	TANK BN HQ CO	06/24/43	USAPS	APO IN DIAL**
253	36	ARMD INF REG	06/16/42	LA	
253	36	Arm Inf Reg Co A	08/16/42	LA 11	eto Rice not cto PM LA**
253	no list	CO B MAINT BN	09/03/42	BARSTOW	C/O PM RICE NOT LA
253	no list	CO B MAINT BN	09/18/42	LA11	C/O PM RICE NOT LA
254	37	ARMD INF CO F	02/10/43	LA	
254	37	ARM REG CO F	02/10/43	LA 5	
254	46	MED BN CO B	02/15/43	LA 7	
254	35	ARM REG SERV CO	03/01/43	BLYTHE	
254		HQ 4TH A.D.	03/06/43	USAPS	
254	35	ARM REG SERV CO	03/30/43	NEEDLES	
254	22	ARM FA BN SERV CO	04/04/43	USAPO	
254	84	REN BN	04/06/43	USAPS	
254	37	ARM REG	04/19/43	USAPS	
254	37	Arm Reg Band	04/30/43	USAPS	
254	35	ARM REG SERV CO	05/03/43	USAPS	machine cancel 6pm
254		POSTAL OFFICER	06/01/43	USAPS	
254	144	Signal Co	12/07/42	BARSTOW	
254	37	ARM REG	12/10/42	BARSTOW	4 A.D. DESEST MANSUVERS
254	37	ARM INF HO CO	12/13/42	BARSTOW	
254	51	ARMD INF CO G	12/22/42	LA	
255	145	ARMD SIG CO	08/19/42	LA 14	
255		no unit shown	08/25/42	LA 8	
255	81	Arm Reg HQ 2 Bn	09/16/42	Fenner	
255	46	ARM INF REG CO G	10/01/42	LA 3	5 div part of return 7
255	46	ARM INF REG	10/01/42	LA 8	
256	68	ARM REG MAINT CO	02/24/43	LA	4 Bar
256	76	ARMD MED BN	03/03/43	LA	UNIT 5**
256	68	ARMD REG CO E	10/13/42	YUCCA, AZ	not c/o PM LA but Camp Young**
256	128	ARM FA BN MED DET	10/27/42	BARSTOW	
256	25	ARM ENG BN HQ CO	10/22/42	LA	
256	50	A.I. REG HO	11/01/42	BARSTOW	
256	68	Armd Reg Co G	12/06/42	BARSTOW	
256	128	ARM FA BN MED DET	12/24/42	LA	AIRMAIL LETTER
257	87	REC BN CO D	03/09/43	CAMP POLK	C/O POSTMASTER L.A.
257	31	Arm Reg HQ 3 Bn	03/22/43	USAPS	
257	87	Arm. Rcn Bn Co B	03/24/43	USAPS	APO no date in dial
257	40	Arm Reg Co F 2 Bn	04/24/00	USAPS	APO
257	147	ARM SIG CO	04/27/00	USAPS	APO
257		MED DET MAINT BN	05/22/00	USAPS	APO

Table 1(continued)

Military Units with APO Numbers Recorded at Desert Training Center

APO NO	UNIT TYPE	DATE	POSTMARK	NOTES
259	2	ARM REG HO CO 2 Bn	09/28/43	USAPT
259	9	ARM ENG BN CO A	09/30/43	USAPS
259	16	ARMD FA BN	NO DATE	APO
259	52	ARMD INF REG CO D	NO DATE	NOT PM BUT USED
261	41	TK BN SEV. CO	NO DATE	NOT PM BUT USED
307	151	MED BN	09/04/42	BARSTOW
307	53	EVAC HOSPITAL	09/05/42	NEEDLES
307	7	CORPS HQ	09/29/42	LA
351	80	ENG CO B	05/04/42	'ALBANY,NY'
351	773	TD BN HOS CO	05/04/42	INDIO
352	2	Armored Corps HQ	08/24/42	INDIO
437	231	Q.M. CO.	??/??/43	USAPS
439	54	EVC HOSP	04/13/43	USAPS
439	534	ORD CO (HM) TK	06/04/43	USAPS
441	534	ORD CO	03/24/43	USAPS
441	388	BOMB SQ 312 Bomb Gp	04/19/43	USAPS
441	980	FA BN BTY C	04/24/43	USAPS
441	980	FA BN BTY C	05/31/43	USAPS
441	389	BOMBSO	06/22/43	USAPS
544	21	EVAC HOSP.	03/07/43	USAPS
544	533	QMS BN CO C	05/05/43	USAPS
544	21	EVACUATION HOSP.	06/11/43	USAPS
545	533	OM BN Serv	02/26/43	LA
545	666	ENG TOPO CO	03/02/43	LA
545		DEMOLITION SECTION	03/05/43	LA
545	836	ENGBN	03/07/43	LA
NOAPO	97	OM BN CO C	01/04/43	LA
NOAPO	22	FA BN SERVICE BTY	04/06/43	USAPS
No APO	151	MED BN CO C	11/07/42	BARSTOW
No APO	348	ENGERS Co A	11/11/42	BARSTOW
Rice	836	AVN ENG	01/01/43	LA
Rice	836	AVN ENG	01/24/43	LA
Rice	391	BOMBSQ	08/11/43	BLYTHE
Rice	836	ENG	12/26/42	LA
Young	742	TANK BN MED DET	01/30/43	INDIO
Young	194	ORD CO D	02/02/43	INDIO
Young	194	ORDCO	02/05/43	INDIO
Young	477	ORD EVAC CO	02/05/43	INDIO
Young	826	TO BN	03/03/43	LA
Young	93	SIG BN CO C	03/30/44	INDIO
Young	93	SIG BN CO C	06/29/43	USAPS
Young	62	FA BN BTY A	06/06/42	INDIO
Young	742	TK BN	12/00/42	INDIO
Young	191	TK BN CO C	12/20/42	LA 7
Young	194	ORDCO	02/15/43	INDIO
NO APO	HQ	Comm Zone	03/08/43	LA

Except for divisional APO numbers, there are no records known to exist which indicate the APO numbers were assigned to military units during their stay at DTC. It is hoped that readers will assist the author in discovering these assignments by reporting new information based on covers in their collections. APO numbers that were assigned to these units can be broken down into three groups.

Group One used APOs 307, 351, and 352 during the period July to December 1942. The second group used, APOs 437,439, 441, 544 and 545 for the units assigned during the first part of 1943. The final group

of APO numbers were 180, 181, 182, 183, 184,185,187, and 189 starting in July 1943 and continuing to the end of the last maneuver in March 1944. This information is based on a survey of more than 150 covers and differs somewhat from the data shown in *United States Number Military Post Offices* by Cosentini and Gruenzner.

Special thanks must be given to Harold Richow and Randy Stehle for the information and support given during the preparation of this chapter. Please report new information concerning DTC covers to Rod Crossley, P. O. Box 729, Montrose, CA 9102 1.

Table 2**Military Units Assigned to Desert Training Center**

Maneuver Name	Corp	Maneuver Dates	Unit Assinged	APO#	Dates Assinged	notes
Units Assigned to Specific Maneuvers						
None	1 Arm	04/11/42-08/01/42	2 Tank Group other unknown		04/19/42-01/31/43	ordered to Indio
2 Armored Crop Calif. Maneuver	2 Arm	08/02/42-10/31/42	3 Armored Div. 5 Armored Div 7 Motorized Div	253 254 7	07/26/42-11/09/42 08/14/42-11/19/42 08/14/42-10/20/42	order to Camp Young
#1 Calif. Maneuver	4 Arm	11/09/42-03/29/43	4 Armored Div. 6 Armored Div. 6 Motorized Div	255 256 6	11/17/42-06/13/43 10/10/42-03/20/43 11/29/42-02/22/43	ordered to Camp Young ordered to Camp Young
#2 Calif. Maneuver	9 Corp	03/29/43-07/26/43	7 Armored Div. 8 Motorized Div 33 Infantry Div.	257 8 33	03/11/43-08/12/43 03/20/43-08/15/43 04/13/43-07/24/43	to camp young to camp young only ng div here
#3 Calif. Maneuver	15 Crop	07/23/11/13/43	77 Infantry Div 9 Armored Div. 79 Infantry Div. 81 Infantry Div. 85 Infantry Div. 90 Infantry Div.	77 259 79 81 85 90	04/19/43-10/01/43 08/01/43-10/25/43 08/17/43-12/04/43 07/17/43-11/20/43 06/23/43-10/07/43 09/12/43-09/26/43	order to camp young to Goff&Camp Ibis to Camp Young to Camp Young to Camp Young only there 14 days
#4 Calif Maneuver	4 Corp	11/13/43-01/17/44	93 Infantry Div. 11 Armored Div. 80 Infantry Div. 95 Infantry Div. 104 Infantry Div.	93 261 80 93 104	07/08/43-01/15/44 10/29/43-02/11/44 12/09/43-03/12/44 10/18/43-02/18/44 11/10/43-03/14/44	colored div. to Ibis
#5 Calif. Maneuver	10 Corp	01/14/44-04/30/44				same divisions as in #4 Calif. Maneuver

Assigned to Desert Training Center or Camp Young

Branch	Unit Assinged	APO#	Dates Assinged	notes
Antiaircraft Artillery	57AAABrigade 114 AAA Group		11/09/43-03/10/44 02/11/43-08/25/43	to Calif-Arizona Maneuver area to Camp Young
Armored units	3 Tank Group 6 Tank Group 9 Tank Group 10 Tank Group	188	11/23/42-06/13/43 05/06/43-12/14/43 08/19/43-03/23/44 11/28/43-04/01/44	ordered to DTC ordered to DTC ordered to DTC - Arizona ordered to Cal-Arz Maneuver Area
Cavalry units	11 Cavalry Group 4 Cavalry Reg. 15 Cavalry Reg 107 Cavarly Reg	182	05/05/43-01/31/44 01/24/43-08/03/43 08/20/43-02/02/44 08/03/42-12/11/42	unit activated at Camp Young ordered to DTC ordered to DTC ordered to Camp Young Ohio NG unit
Field Artillery units	16 FA Brigade 76 FA Brigade 18 FA Group Mtz 119 FA Group mtz 144 FA Group mtz 181 FA Group mtz 182 FA Group mtz 183 FA Group mtz 188 FA Group mtz 195 FA Group mtz 181 FA Reg	182	08/10/43-08/17/43 04/16/43-08/20/43 10/09/43-03/15/44 08/23/43-02/02/44 04/20/43-08/19/43 03/01/43-10/17/43 08/23/43-11/20/43 04/16/43-08/06/43 04/21/43-08/15/43 04/30/43-08/15/43 08/14/43-03/01/43	ordered to Cal-Arz formed HHB 9 Corp ordered to Camp Young ordered to Camp Young ordered to Camp Young ordered to Camp Young ordered to DTC formed from 181 FA reg ordered to DTC ordered to Camp Young ordered to Camp Young ordered to Camp Young ordered to DTC formed 144 FA Group mtz
Engineer units	1120 Eng Group Comb 348 Eng GS Reg 355 Eng GS Reg 356 Eng GS Reg		04/15/43-11/10/43 11/02/42-04/15/43 12/17/42-08/01/43 02/08/43-09/03/43	ordered to Camp Young form from 348 eng ordered to Camp Young formed 1120 eng gp ordered to Needles not DTC ordered to DTC (colored unit)
Tank Destroyer	5 Tank Dst Group 6 Tank Dst Group 10 Tank DstGroup 12 Tank DstGroup 15 TankDstyGroup		04/23/43-11/18/43 01/08/43-07/31/43 11/14/43-11/18/43 07/27/43-01/31/44 01/23/44-03/18/44	assigned to Camp Young